

TOP SECRET

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25th October, 1950

To: []

From: []

I attach a memorandum from my Headquarters on the NCFA/KLISSURA question. It should not be taken as a definite expression of our views, but rather as an indication of the course our thoughts are taking. As such, it might be of interest to you.

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not unnaturally feels that he has been out-smarted.

c) KLISSURA himself, may well have some understanding with EGE as well as with the Italians. He might double cross them later if he felt himself strong enough to do so, but we have no reason to suppose that without either or both of them behind him he represents anything very much. He never had much backing in the country, and we don't see how he can have acquired much backing among the refugees since he left it.

Note: 1) The important factors in his political background as we see them were that on escaping from Albania at the end of the war both he and FRASHERI were interned by us. FRASHERI was released first and, according to KLISSURA, ganged up with Albert and the left-wingers, leaving KLISSURA himself when he came out six months later.

1. The crux of the problem seems to be how we can reach any agreement with KLISSURA which will not shift the whole weight of the Committee appreciably to the right, to the disadvantage of Albert and the EK left wing. |||

2. The forces in favour of a move to the right are varied and powerful. It would be welcome to ZOG and the Italians. It would be acceptable to KUPI and SAID. It would be not displeasing to some of the Ballist elements. In fact in a recent private letter to AMERI, KLISSURA has pointed out that "only the intransigence of a small section of Balli left wing fanatics" (this is not an exact quote, but is the sense of it) stands in the way of the almost complete unification of all Albanian anti-Communist refugees.

3. We appreciate that such an argument may at first sight contain great attractions (particularly with OFG who are setting such high hopes on achieving just this result in various refugee groups). However, on looking at it more closely in addition to moving further into the Italian orbit with all that implies, we may also end by putting an undue number of strings into ZOG's hands.

4. Let us assume for a moment that all parties concerned were to agree to KLISSURA, or a nominee of KLISSURA's, being offered a seat on the Committee. What then would the position be?

(Note: Let us leave out for the moment any speculation on the extent to which ZOG and the Italians may be in league for, temporarily, at least, their interests seem either fortuitously or by agreement to be the same).

a) KUPI is, with certain reservations, ZOG's man.

b) SAID's attitude is unpredictable, but he may well be in a bad mood to take our guidance, particularly if he sees a chance of getting his own back at the present EK leadership by teaming with KLISSURA.

Note: 1) It is of great interest that in writing to AMERI KLISSURA says he is at present working closely with SAID.

ii) SAID has been nursing a grievance against DOSTI and the present EK leadership ever since the "Green International" boys in America accepted DOSTI and the EK as representing the Albanian peasants, rather than SAID's "Peasant Party". It had been provisionally agreed with G.M. DIMITROV that SAID should be the man, and SAID not unnaturally feels that he has been out-smarted.

c) KLISSURA himself, may well have some understanding with ZOG as well as with the Italians. He might double cross them later if he felt himself strong enough to do so, but we have no reason to suppose that without either or both of them behind him he represents anything very much. He never had much backing in the country, and we don't see how he can have acquired much backing among the refugees since he left it.

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later no option but to go off and make the best terms he could with ZOG. There are other versions of this story, but the variations in it are not very important. The main point is that he lived for a while in Egypt on ZOG's money. Later there was an estrangement and he went off in a hugg to Syria where to the best of our knowledge he has been till he turned up in Italy on trouble bent.

- ii) We would welcome any information to indicate what strings exist between KLISSURA and ZOG; KLISSURA and the Italians; KLISSURA and SAID; KLISSURA and the HKI.

d) DOSTI is obviously averse to any negotiations. They can do little to better his personal position and may worsen it.

e) FALLI is a light weight.

Which all adds up to a situation in which the Committee plus KLISSURA, or a KLISSURIST, may be in danger of coming too much under the influence of the Italians, and/or ZOG; or be in danger of breaking up.

6. Do we mind the Italian/ZOG possibility? We think we do. For the following reasons:

a) Such an arrangement may well upset the Greeks. They don't like the HK anyway, nor do they like the Italians. If the outcome of the negotiations is to maintain the HK position in the Committee but to add to it a HK-ist with strong Italian affiliations the result may be most unpalatable to Greek opinion.

Note: We don't put this up in any defeatist frame of mind. It may be quite possible to move towards a closer understanding with the Italians without prejudicing our hard won position with the Greeks. But we make this point, and the ensuing ones, in order to set out and assess the dangers we will have to meet and circumvent.

b) If KLISSURA takes his line from ZOG, how will KUPI react?

c) Such an arrangement will make Albert's position almost intolerable. The fact that it is now known that we are even considering "broadening" the Committee in the KLISSURA direction must be a pretty brisk kick in the teeth for him. He presumably feels that if any additional Ballist is to come in, prior claim is his, on the grounds that he has been running effective operations for us, while KLISSURA has been doing nothing more than committing a nuisance.

d) Apart from Albert's feelings, do we want to do anything which will damage his prestige? That depends a good deal to what emphasis we give the possibility of active operations within the country at some future date. Without the full and enthusiastic support of Albert and the Ballist left, we could take no really worthwhile action in the southern areas. We may, or may not, consider that that factor is outweighed by the added strength which approval from the Italians and ZOG might bring us in the north and centre.

e) But there is a further consideration, affecting both the possible success of operations and the current effect of propaganda. How much are we hoping that if things go badly for HOKHA those officials, soldiers and police, who are Communists only by opportunism rather than by conviction may be lured towards our side. We assume that such disaffection is a major aim of our propaganda, and it is certain that if considerable disaffection did not occur GUSH, if it were ever launched, would be foredoomed to failure. Now there are two people in the Committee with whom it would not be too difficult for coat-turning Communists to make terms - Albert and SAID - and of these by far the most important is Albert. He fought side by side with the partisans for a considerable period during the war and is an old comrade in arms of many of the people who hold office under the present regime. SAID's links are more tenuous dating back to his student days. So we must carefully consider whether any broadening of the Committee towards the right may not result in blunting its cutting edge within the country. The more it becomes what HOKHA's propaganda calls it, a bunch of ex-collaborating thugs working in cahoots with the Italians, ex-oppressors of Albania, the harder will it be to split the enemy's ranks.

6. Further indications of the way things are going are the Italian attempt to insert MARKOGJONI into the fold. And possibly also the reports of ECG's impending visit to America. We cannot believe that his ailments are not - largely at any rate - diplomatic. Whether he ever goes to America or not, the rumour which reached us that he was intending to, is no doubt being interpreted, and was intended to be interpreted, in Albanian circles as a sign that he enjoys some degree of American support. What a splendid old fox he is.

7. We think that [] and [] should give considered opinion on these points and any other which they may think relevant. In the light of all this OFC could then put forward their suggestion as to the line the negotiations should take and what terms we should offer them.